Basic Rules of
Comfortable Design
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The Basic goal of any design project is the comfort and enjoyment of those who will use the space. Design should define how we feel and value the space we are in. The following are some basic guidelines to use when decorating a room. If followed and properly applied, they will help to make any space comfortable, relaxing, and inviting.

- Rooms should mimic nature
  - Floors should feel grounded. This is achieved by visual weight. It should be darker or heavier than the walls.
  - Walls should be warm and enveloping. Like a grove of trees. Usually slightly lighter than the floor, they should feel protective and seem to wrap around you without "closing-in" on you.
  - Ceilings need to be light, open and airy. Like a the sky. They should have almost no visual weight.

- Use a variety of materials. At least three and no more than seven. One material should be dominate, without being overpowering. Materials should be natural if possible for a comfortable, solid, feel.

- Use a variety of lighting to create and control the atmosphere of the room. Lighting should be conducive to the purpose of the room. Use natural light as much as possible for the most comfortable, natural feeling. Incandescent or halogen bulbs used in fixtures creates a more natural effect and creates a softer feel.

- Eliminate clutter. "A place for everything and everything in it's place." If it's just taking up space it's not relaxing or comfortable.

- Use color in soft ways that are conducive to the purpose and use of the room. Do not use more than two dominant colors and never use high contrast color schemes if you want comfort. No color feels empty and is generally not very comforting or inviting. Use colors that you are comfortable with. Be brave and use some color, you'll find tremendous enjoyment in it if properly used.

- ◆ Notice the lines used in the room. Comfortable designs use mostly horizontal lines. Lines give direction and lead the eye, so be conscious of what lines are doing in your room.

- ◆ Use soft, rounded shapes. Sharp lines, points, or abrupt changes have their uses, but generally don't lead to a relaxing and comfortable look.

- ◆ Incorporate nature into your design. You can use plants, flowers, paintings of nature, stone, water, etc. We are most "at home" in nature and thus, are most comfortable.

- ◆ Have only one major focal point, or emphasis, in a room. Having more than one becomes subconsciously confusing.

- ◆ Personalize your space. Express yourself. Comfortable rooms reflect your personality and the things that you love or enjoy. Use accessories that are meaningful to you, not the latest fad.

- ◆ Separate the zones of your home. Public, work, and private. Decorate them according to their use, but always have one unifying feature throughout. This provides variety and continuity, creating harmony.

- ◆ Use soft slightly heavy textures for a comfortable feel. Smooth textures tend to be very formal and less comfortable.

- ◆ Use space to create a feel or atmosphere that you are at home in. Space can create
comfort and visual escape in a room.

These are just a few guidelines. Put your personality and feelings into them as you apply them. Design should reflect your true self. When you are comfortable in your space, then those who visit will feel comfortable too. Add things that bring you comfort and enjoyment as you find them. <u>Remember, a well decorated room is never truly finished.</u>